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ABSTRACT

Presented in this paper are criteria developed by the states of Washington and Alabama of what is believed to be a quality reading program. "State of Washington Criteria Leading to Excellence in Reading Programming" consists of a list of 25 statements that are reflective of a good reading program. Some of these are that there is coordination and articulation of all of the administrative facets of the reading program, that there is a testing system which includes the use of criterion-referenced measures, that all children are taught at the instructional reading level, that there is an articulated preschool component that involves parents, and that there is an adult basic education component. "Alabama Right to Read Program: Criteria for the Development of Successful Reading Programs" lists statements indicative of an excellent reading program in the areas of programs, staff, community relations, instruction, and facilities and materials. (WR)

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ALABAMA RIGHT TO READ PROGRAM

CRITERIA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUCCESSFUL READING PROGRAMS

ADOPTED BY THE FOURTEEN PHASE I (1973-74) RIGHT TO READ SCHOOL SYSTEMS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

I. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Program

1. Each local education agency teacher of reading uses a scope and sequence of learnings designed to insure the acquisition of reading skills.

2. There is coordination and articulation between all federally funded, volunteer, and other reading and language arts programs with the basic reading curriculum.

3. A continuous record keeping system of reading progress is maintained for each individual student.

4. The local education agency works cooperatively with existing pre-school components to coordinate and articulate reading programs.

5. The local education agency has an adult basic education reading component.

6. The local education agency has a continuous educational program which includes provision for summer instruction in reading.

7. The board of education of the local education agency has an incentive program for teacher staff development in reading.

8. Each school in the local education agency has a media center which is operated on an open basis and is readily accessible to students and teachers.

9. The local education agency has a complete testing system which includes the use of criterion-referenced measures.

B. Staff

1. The local education agency varies the student/teacher ratios as necessary to meet the objectives of the reading instructional program.

2. The local education agency has a continuous staff development program in reading for all teachers, administrators and supportive personnel.

3. The local education agency provides training to teachers in the content areas to develop competencies which will allow them to adjust instruction to the varying reading achievement levels of their students.

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4. The local education agency has trained volunteer helpers in reading instruction.

5. Each school in the local education agency has a media center which is staffed by professional and supportive personnel.

6. The local education agency has a director of all reading activities who has the authority, responsibility and time granted by the superintendent and board of education to organize, implement and coordinate a comprehensive reading program.

C. Community Relations

1. Each local education agency has a reporting system that fully, accurately, and specifically communicates a student's progress in reading to parents.

2. The local education agency introduces, explains and periodically reports the reading program to the school community.

3. The local education agency shows willingness to share instructional methods and materials which have proved effective in reading programs.

II. INSTRUCTION

1. Teachers of reading at the junior and senior high school levels have a demonstrated knowledge of developmental reading as it relates to the reading curriculum of the local education agency.

2. Provisions are made for teaching every student at his own instructional level and learning rate.

3. The teaching-learning environment is conducive to the development of positive attitudes toward reading.

4. Every teacher demonstrates a knowledge of various methods and techniques used in the teaching of reading to make provision for the differences that exist among students.

III. FACILITIES AND MATERIALS

1. Appropriate supplementary reading materials to support the basic reading curriculum are provided and utilized.

2. Materials are utilized which recognize different races, cultures, and sexes.

3. A wide variety of supportive media on all levels of learning is available and readily accessible.

4. Instructional and practice reading materials are filed in a central location in each school for use by all teachers as needed.

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STATE OF WASHINGTON

CRITERIA LEADING TO EXCELLENCE IN READING PROGRAMMING

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Preface

One of the basic dimensions of the State of Washington Right to Read Program is that of making direct technical assistance available to each public school district and to every private and parochial school administrative unit for a sustained period of time. Right to Read funds are to be used to assist in the development of a cadre of trained personnel throughout the state who will first develop and implement a comprehensive reading program in their own school districts and then be available as leaders in the preparation of other local educational R2R directors.

Educational thought supports a rationale for rethinking some basic beliefs. Bloom and others have pointed out that educators have used the normal curve for grading purposes so long that they have come to expect a certain number of failures as normal. These failures are no longer appropriate with newer interpretations of the meaning of aptitude. Aptitude no longer indicates the ceiling of what a child can learn; it more accurately indicates the rate at which he learns. For too long the school day has been scheduled with a specific amount of time for instruction held constant and achievement being the variable. The result of holding the time of instruction constant for every student is that there is a wide difference in the range of achievement. If, on the other hand, schools are to teach so every child will learn, it stands to reason that the expectation should be held constant and the time needed for learning will become the variable.

The "State of Washington Criteria Leading to Excellence in Reading Programming" is an overview of what is believed to be a quality reading program. These criteria will help the Local Education Agency (LEA) to evaluate the current reading program. Strengths, weaknesses and omissions can be detected. From such a process, needs can be established and priorities ordered. It is believed that the Criteria may provide a standard to which all Local Education Agencies may aspire and will constitute one dimension of evaluation for the State of Washington Right to Read Program.

Although they are not identified as separate criteria, the fact must be emphasized that a pervasive concern of all those responsible for the teaching of reading includes a need to feel a genuine sensitivity to the thoughts and feelings of the learner, and a need to help develop in youth a belief that every person has the "power to magnify, to multiply the ways in which he exists, to make his life full, significant and interesting"* through reading.

*Aldous Huxley

STATE OF WASHINGTON CRITERIA LEADING TO EXCELLENCE IN READING PROGRAMMING

1. There is a commitment by staff to pupil learning and not merely to teaching alone. Teaching is an important act, but the individual child's learning is the product of greatest consideration.

2. There is coordination and articulation of all of the administrative facets of the reading program.

3. There is provision made for the varying developmental readiness rates, the varying rates of learning, and the special needs and problems of all children.

4. There is continuous progress to the sequence of the reading curriculum in order to prevent the omission of specific skills and assure freedom of individual learning rate.

5. There is a K-12 record keeping system for individual pupils.

6. There is a testing system which includes the use of criterion-referenced measures.

7. The LEA annually makes available the performance levels of the students in reading.

8. There is a reporting system for reading development that fully, accurately, and specifically documents a student's growth in reading and provides this information to parents.

9. All children are taught at the Instructional Reading Level.

10. There are curriculum adjustments in other subject areas for those students who are unable to cope with grade level reading material.

11. There is a system within the LEA to furnish teachers with diversified instructional and practice materials.

12. There is provision made for children to read, hear and respond to the literature of the language.

13. There is evidence that junior and senior high school teachers of reading demonstrate knowledge of developmental reading as it relates to their LEA's curriculum.

14. The reading program recognizes, accepts and provides for the implications that racial, cultural, and sexual differences may have in terms of curriculum, methodology, organization, administration and materials.

15. Both school and public library resources and services are readily available and their use is maximized.

16. There is information available to the public regarding the LEA's reading curriculum.

17. There is both intensive and extensive inservice education for all certificated staff.

18. There are opportunities provided to secondary teachers in content areas to develop the competencies needed to accommodate to the varying reading achievement levels of their students.

19. There is a program of preparation in reading for all substitute teachers and noncertificated staff who work in the classroom, i.e., teacher aides, parent volunteers, and other auxiliary personnel associated with the school.

20. There is a cadre of trained volunteer reading helpers in each LEA.

21. There is an articulated preschool component that involves parents.

22. There is definite curricular provision within the LEA for gifted and/or high achieving pupils.

23. There is an adult basic education component.

24. The board of education of the LEA may establish an incentive program for teacher inservice education in reading.

25. Each LEA has identified a reading director who has the authority, responsibility, and time for the development and maintenance of an articulated reading program.